

2020

Standing Committee on Policy and Resources



THE
LAW SOCIETY
OF HONG KONG
香港律師會

STANDING COMMITTEE ON POLICY and RESOURCES



The Standing Committee on Policy and Resources is responsible for overseeing the finance and administration of The Law Society, as well as formulating policy strategies for consideration by the Council.

During the year, the Standing Committee convened on 10 occasions. The Standing Committee reviewed the business continuity plan for the Law Society and considered various relief measures that the Law Society proposed to launch for the benefit of the general membership in view of the outbreak of COVID-19. It reviewed and monitored the annual budget, income and expenditure as well as the registration and compliance statistics of The Law Society. It also oversaw the human resources and personnel aspects of The Law Society including staff employment matters and salary review. The Standing Committee also considered matters relating to applications for funding of projects undertaken by The Law Society, nominations of representatives on external organisations, invitations to sponsor or support events and functions organised by external organisations, the selection of service providers for The Law Society and renting office premises. The Standing Committee also made recommendations on the composition and chairmanship of other Standing Committees for the Council's consideration and on amendments to the Standing Orders in relation to appointment and attendance record. The Standing Committee also monitored the progress of the revamp of the Law Society's membership database system and website and trademark registration in Mainland China.

HONG KONG LAWYER EDITORIAL BOARD

The Law Society publishes a monthly journal, *Hong Kong Lawyer*, which contains analysis of recent law and legal practice-specific advice, with priority given to matters affecting legal practitioners in Hong Kong.

Members of the *Hong Kong Lawyer* Editorial Board (“the Editorial Board”) meet at least once a month to discuss and identify topics of interest to the profession. The Editorial Board has continued to work closely with the publisher of *Hong Kong Lawyer* (“the Journal”) to monitor the overall quality and standard of the publication and the official website.

With the digital version of *Hong Kong Lawyer* available on both the Law Society App and the Hong Kong Lawyer website, members as well as other legal professionals can read it online via a computer, smart phone, tablet or other mobile device. Not only does it contain the same content as the print journal, it also contains additional insights, legal news and articles that are exclusive online. The online version is also searchable with hyperlinked sources. The e-Journal thus provides a good source of reference for research purposes. Individual stories (or the entire journal) can also be conveniently shared via social media and email.

Given the upward trend of digital reading, the online readership of the Journal has been steadily increasing. From November 2018 onwards, The Law Society ceased distributing

print copies to our members residing outside Hong Kong and individual members of the Hong Kong Bar Association. Instead, they are notified of the journal's publication by email every month with the provision of a link to the online version.

The print copies of the Journal are distributed to members of The Law Society with local addresses, judges, government departments, law related organisations, as well as China/overseas law societies/barrister associations.

WORKING PARTY ON THE LAW SOCIETY IT SYSTEMS

This year, the Working Party continued to monitor the contractor appointment and contract negotiation process for The Law Society's project to revamp its Membership Database System and Website System ("Revamp Project"). With the assistance of members of the Working Party, the Law Society has appointed a solution provider and commenced the Revamp Project in July.

With the support and recommendations from the Working Party, the Law Society has also appointed solution providers to undertake the following IT projects this year:

- Office 365 system upgrade
- Scanning system revamp
- Hardware procurement for the Revamp Project

The Revamp Project and the various system upgrades will help streamline work, improve the operation efficiency of the Secretariat and increase the stability and robustness of the IT systems for the benefits of all concerned, including the internal users, general members and the public.

The Working Party will continue to keep the Law Society IT Systems under review.

WORKING PARTY ON REVIEW OF THE LAW SOCIETY'S MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

The Working Party was tasked by the Council to review and update the Memorandum and Articles of Association ("M&A") of The Law Society.

The review and updating exercise involved various aspects, including to modernise The Law Society's existing M&A so as to align it with the requirements of the new Companies Ordinance, Cap. 622, to streamline it to increase the administrative efficacy of The Law Society; and to remove identified anomalies in the existing provisions.

The Working Party completed the review exercise in 2019. With the endorsement of the

Council, The Law Society conducted a 90-day consultation on 30 September 2019 to solicit views from solicitor members, trainee solicitors and registered foreign lawyers on the draft new Articles of Association (“draft new AA”). The consultation exercise ended on 31 December 2019.

This year, the Working Party continued its effort to review the feedback received from the consultation and make recommendations to the Council on the further changes to be made to the draft new AA in light of the feedback received. With the assistance of the Working Party, the Council completed deliberations on the feedback received from the consultation and finalized the amendments to the draft new AA in March. The Law Society obtained the written approval of the Registrar of Companies for adoption of the draft new AA in place of the existing M&A under Section 105(2) of the Companies Ordinance, Cap. 622, in May.

Subject to an improvement on the public health condition, The Law Society will next convene a general meeting of members to consider the adoption of the draft new AA by The Law Society.